

## CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method for determining the on time of a light that illuminates a display screen in a handheld wireless communications device, comprising:
  - 5 turning the light that illuminates the display screen on;  
determining one or more time on factors for a viewing activity on the display screen;  
combining the one or more determined time on factors to provide a time on value;  
and
  - 10 keeping the light that illuminates the display screen on at a first intensity level for a duration equal to the time on value and then turning the light to a second intensity level.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the second intensity level is an off state of the light.
3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the second intensity level is a dim mode of the  
15 light.
4. The method of Claim 1, wherein at least one of the time on factors is an ambient light level.
5. The method of Claim 4, wherein the ambient light level is detected by a light sensor.
- 20 6. The method of Claim 5, wherein the light sensor is located in close proximity to the display screen.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein at least one of the time on factors is an amount of information to be displayed on the display screen.
8. The method of Claim 1, wherein at least one of the time on factors is a font size of characters to be displayed on the display screen.
- 5 9. The method of Claim 1, wherein at least one of the time on factors is a type of activity to be performed by an end user.
10. The method of Claim 1, wherein at least one of the time on factors is a behavioral pattern of a user of the handheld wireless communications device.
11. The method of Claim 1, wherein the user is identifiable by the handheld wireless  
10 communications device through a password.
12. The method of Claim 10, wherein the behavioural pattern of a user is an average of time on values.
13. The method of Claim 12, wherein the average of the time on values is weighted more heavily for more recent usage by the user.
- 15 14. The method of Claim 12, wherein the time on values are stored in a log unique to the user.
15. The method of Claim 1, wherein a user profile provides default values for at least a portion of the one or more time on factors.
16. The method of Claim 15, wherein the user profile provides an option for a user to  
20 reset the time on factors to default values.

17. A wireless communications device, comprising:

a body, the body including:

a transmitter;

a receiver;

5 a display screen;

a light source for illuminating the display screen; and

a processor that interfaces with the transmitter, the receiver, the light source; and the display screen, the light source being controlled by the processor, the processor determined a turn on period for the light source according to a time on factor, the time on  
10 factor being at least one of the group consisting of an amount of information to be displayed, a font size of characters to be displayed, behavioural heuristics of a user of the wireless communications device, an activity to be performed by the wireless communications device, and an ambient light level.

18. The wireless communications device of Claim 17, wherein the time on factor is an  
15 amount of information to be displayed.

19. The wireless communications device of Claim 17, wherein the time on factor is an ambient light level.

20. The wireless communications device of Claim 19, wherein the ambient light level is used by the processor to determine an intensity of the light generated by the light source.

21. The wireless communications device of Claim 17, wherein the light source is a light emitting diode.

22. The wireless communications device of Claim 17, wherein the time on factor is behavioural heuristics of a user of the wireless communications device.
23. The wireless communications device of Claim 22, wherein an identity of the user is determined by a password entered on the device.
- 5 24. The wireless communications device of Claim 17, wherein the display screen is capable of displaying a menu to allow a user of the wireless communications device to select the time on factors to be used for determining the turn on period.
25. The wireless communications device of Claim 24, wherein the menu provides an ability to select a dim mode of limited duration after the turn on period terminates.